

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

## 26<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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### VA AWARDS CONTRACT FOR CLINIC IN ITHACA

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the Department of Veterans Affairs has upheld the decision to award a contract to Cayuga Medical Center at Ithaca for the establishment of two new Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) to serve veterans in the Cortland-Tompkins County area. Hinchey has been advocating for a veterans clinic in Ithaca for over a year.

"There are 6,400 veterans living in Tompkins County who have long sought to have better access to the health care they're entitled to receive," said Hinchey. "I am very relieved that the questions surrounding this contract have been resolved and that the clinic in Ithaca will now become a reality."

The Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center at Syracuse originally awarded this contract to Cayuga Medical Center in October 2000 after a 3-month procurement process. Cortland Memorial Hospital filed a protest against the award that was dismissed by the Contracting Officer. Cortland appealed this decision to the General Accounting Office, which recommended that the VA reevaluate its decision. The VA has now completed that reevaluation and has upheld the award decision.

Cayuga Medical's bid envisioned the creation of two clinics, one at its site in Cortlandville and the other at its site on Warren Road in Ithaca. The clinic in Cortlandville has been operating since January 2 on an interim basis while the protest was being resolved. Plans are now underway to begin seeing veterans at the Ithaca site in October 2001. Prior to the awarding of this contract, veterans in Tompkins County have had to travel to the VA hospital in Syracuse for routine medical assistance.

"Cayuga Medical Center has shown great ingenuity in developing the plan for these clinics," added Hinchey. "I am confident that they will be providing the veterans of Tompkins County with the best medical care available."

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